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Contending for the Cup.

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ANECDOTES
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ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY
OF
HORSE-RACING,
FROM THE
EARLIEST TIMES.

LONDON :
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MDCCCXXV.

ANECDOTES
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WHEN Horse Races first became the amusement or diversion of the spectators and others, will at present be difficult to prove, but that these Games were used at public Festivities, even so early as the Patriarchal times, the following anecdotes will demonstrate.

They began in the most Eastern Nations, and from them other Countries followed their example;

but the manner or mode of running varied greatly in different ages and nations; for as knowledge and experience have taught mankind to bring every art and science to the perfection we now have them, so it happened in respect of Horse-Races, wherein at first the Horses drew their burthens instead of carrying them on their backs, as they now do.

The first Races we read of, were when the Horses drew the Chariots, which were low and small, and the Charioteers stood up in them, with sometimes a man on horseback preceding the Chariot, particularly in those

Races performed by the Greeks and Romans.^a How the men were able to ride on Horseback is not easily conceived, since Suetonius tells us,^b that they rode without saddles, which were not invented till ages after.

The first account of these Races that we meet with, was at the Festivities of Mithras, or the Sun, after performing their sacrifices, which Zoroaster, the great reformer of the religion of the Medes and Persians, always did in a cave, in *aprico subdio*,^c wherein was

^a Montfaucon's *Antiq.* Vol. iii. Lib. 3. Cap. 4. p. 178. ^b *Vitæ Cæsarum.*

^c Dr. Hyde *de Religione Veterum Persarum*, taken from a Persian writer, pp. 117, 118.

Mithras and all the symbols: This cave was called *Antrum Mithriacum*, in which the sacred fire was kept, with priests and priestesses attending;^a and by the *Mithriaca*, Dr. Hyde tells us, are to be understood the symbolic figures, or the rites and ceremonies.

The sculptures of these sacrifices and symbols, in basso-relievo, were kept in the cave, some of Mithras, others with the *Archimagus* or High Priest killing the Bull, attended properly by others with torches, standing mostly cross-legged, like the Knights-Templars in our churches, all in the

^a Ibid. p. 17.

dress of Mithras, or the Sun, viz. in the Phrygian Bonnet, as called, but truly the Patriarchal Mitre, the Toga, Tunic, Mantle, and Breeches. They were not dressed like the Greek and Roman Apollo, representing the Sun, owing to the different habits of the East and West; for at Rome Mithras was represented or painted like a young Man, with the Phrygian Bonnet on his head.

Many sculptures in basso-relievo have been found in the Eastern and all other countries where these Festivities have been kept. In some of these, a serpent is seen wreathed round a trunk

of a tree or statue, which is always when along with others, one symbol of the Sun.^a The first figure of Mithras in the ninety-sixth Plate in Montfaucon, has a serpent wrapt round, as also the second, and others had.^b Macrobius^c tells us, the serpent is always a symbol of the Sun, and we meet with it in all the symbols of Mithras.

The Persian Monarchs celebrated the Festivity of Mithras, or the Sun, with great pomp, and amongst other amusements, they

^a Montfaucon *Antiq.* Vol. i. p. 4.

^b Ibid. Vol. i. Pt. 2. Cap. 3. pp. 232, 233.

^c *Saturnalia*, p. 20.

had their Horse-Races, who drew their drivers in chariots, for we find in the Scripture, that on account of the idolatry of the Kings of Judah, Josiah took away the Horses that the Kings of Judah had given to the Sun, and burnt the Chariots of the Sun;^a this was done in the English year of Josiah's reign, in Anno Mundi 3308, six hundred and thirty-three years before the Nativity of our Saviour, or calculating to the present period, 1825, now two thousand and sixty years ago.^b

From the Eastern nations, the

^a Second Book of *Kings*, Cap. 23. V. ii.

^b Isaacson's *Chronology*, p. 122.

Festivities of Mithras were celebrated by other nations, both in the southern, western, and northern parts. The Greeks had their Hippodromes, and the Ludus Trojanus was instituted in Sicily.

Plutarch informs us, that the worship of Mithras, or the Sun, was introduced into the Roman Empire in Pompey's time,^a and restored in great pomp when Julius Cæsar was dictator; forty seven years before the Nativity of Christ.

Amongst the Romans, these chariots were driven by slaves,

^a The Battle of Pharsalia Anno Mundi 3902.

afterwards by people of higher rank, nay even by Emperors, as Suetonius, Tacitus, and others inform us.^a

Montfaucon^b tells us, the *Equiria* at Rome were so called from the Horse-Races that were run in the Campus Martius, but more anciently they were run in the open country, and afterwards in inclosures, railed in with wood, to prevent the spectators from crowding in too much, till the grand Circus was built by Tarquinius Priscus, in Anno Mundi 3344, six hundred and four years before

^a *Vitæ Neronis. Tacitus, Lib. 15.*

^b *Antiquities, Vol. ii. Part I. Lib. 4. p. 145.*

the birth of Christ,^a when they were performed therein. This custom in some measure is kept up in many places in England, more especially towards the ending-post, either by rails or cords.

Augustus the Emperor,^b was a great admirer of these Horse Races, as Virgil tells us, in a most inimitable description;^c and after the Emperors, &c. had instituted

^a Onuphrius Panvinus, in his Treatise *de Ludus Circensibus*, p. 12, says, they were so called, *ob Equorum Cursu*.

^b Who began his reign about thirty years before our Saviour's birth, and died in A. D. 14. Montfaucon *Antiq.* Vol. iii. p. 2. Lib. 3. Cap. 2.

^c *Æneid*, ver. 545.

the solemn and periodical festivities of the Romans, such as the *Agones*, *Quinquinalia*, &c. the Horse-Races were a principal part thereof.

The accurate Pagi informs us, that in A. D. 60, Nero, afterwards Emperor, made himself Consul the fourth time, on purpose for celebrating the Decennalia of the Cæsarean Empire;^a and in the same year he instituted, in imitation of the Greek Olympics, Gymniaca, the Agon Neronianus, which was continued afterwards every fourth year, in all which, Horse-Races made a principal

^a Stukeley's *Paleographia Britannica*, pp. 36,-37,-38. Isaacson's *Chronology*, p. 187.

part of the diversion. In A. D. 64, Nero celebrated his second Agon, as Eusebius tells us, and the Emperor Gordianus revived it two hundred and forty years after.^a

In time^b the Trojan game and this racing on the Emperor's birthday, became so blended together, that at length the *Agon Capitolinus* and others were swallowed up in the celebrity of these Races.

The Emperor Aurelian,^c who was yet an heathen, was extremely fond

^a Stukeley's *Palæographia Britannica*, p. 189.

^b Ibid, p. 39, 74.

^c Who began his reign in A. D. 271, and died in 276.

of the festivities of Mithras, or the Sun, and particularly of Horse-Races; this fondness was greatly increased by his being so much amongst the Persians. Having conquered Zenobia and her sons, and taken Palmyra in A. D. 273,^a it will excite no wonder, therefore, that the same festivities were continued in England, and particularly at York, where they were celebrated, and probably in his reign.

I observed (at p. 5, ante) that sacrifices of Mithras or the Sun, were performed in a cave, wherein

^a Stukeley's *Palæographia*, Vol. iii. p. 13.
Isaacson's *Chronology*, p. 208.

were sculptures in basso-relievo: I also observed, that sculptures of these kinds were found in most nations where these festivities were performed, even in Great Britain.

A sculpture of this kind, in basso-relievo, was found in 1747, in digging the cellars and foundations for some houses since built by Mr. Benson, in Micklegate, at York, almost opposite to St. Martin's church, but a little nearer the river Ouse. The workmen, in digging deeper than any of the adjacent foundations, at about ten or eleven feet, came to a stone which appeared to be a basso-relievo, with figures somewhat de-

faced;^a a representation of which, from copper-plates, may be seen as quoted; and the original was, in 1769, in the possession of the Rev. Mr. Sandercock, in York.

In this sculpture, Mithras represents the Archimagus killing the bull for the sacrifice. He has on the Persian mantle, called Candys, and the Phrygian bonnet, called Tyara, as Lucian informs us, like what we see in the figures of Persipolis, whence the worship of Mithras went to Rome.^b

^a Stukeley's *Palæographia Britannica*, p. 13. *Philosophical Transactions*, by Martin, 1756, vol. x. p. 1311.

^b Montfaucon's *Antiq.* Vol. i. Pt. 2, Cap. 14. p. 235.

There is a figure on each side, habited in the same manner, standing cross-legged, one holding a torch up commonly, but is here a little defaced; the other figure holding the torch down, is plain.

Underneath is the figure of a horse galloping, with two ministers, like horse coursers attending him, intimating the Sun's course.

So fond was Aurelian of the festivities of Mithras, that in many sculptures in basso-relievo work, he had a serpent represented, as on his triumphal arch at Vésantium, i. e. Burgundy; wherefore Stukely thinks this sculpture at York

was placed here in Aurelian's time.^a The other figures are defaced, but seem, by the like symbolic manner of their dress, to be officiating Priests.

Stukeley says,^b he saw other sculptures of Mithras at Chester and in Northumberland; and no doubt but that there are many more in Britain, either destroyed or undiscovered.

From all these accounts, I think no doubt can be made, of the festivities of Mithras, or the Sun, having been celebrated at York, whether in Aurelian's time or

^a *Pal. Brit.* p. 17.

^b *Ibid.* p. 34.

before, especially as it was their chief imperial city, where the chief commanders of the Romans resided.

How long these festivities were performed at York, I cannot at present say, but St. Jerome, in his epistle to Læta, says to her, “a few years ago your cousin Gracchus, when he was præfect of the city of Rome, broke down, destroyed, and burnt the cave of Mithras, about A. D. 378.”

Not long after this time, we may reasonably conclude, that the Roman præfect at York might follow his example, and demolished

the subterranean temple in Micklegate, where this sculpture was found, especially if the præfect favoured the christians.

Dr. Stukeley^a supposes the races at York, celebrated in honour of Mithras, were on the neighbouring plain of Knavesmire, where the annual races are now run, or in that called Camplesham pasture: both these are near Micklegate-bar, a little on the left hand, going out of York, southward; not far from the cave where the sculpture of Mithras was found, and very convenient for the purpose.

^a *Pal. Brit.* p. 16.

The Doctor, in the first conjecture, is quite wrong; because **Knavesmire** was a boggy marshy ground, and is now only kept in proper order for Horse-coursing by large drains, &c. Part of it, even in summer time, in a wet season, is so soft, that it is difficult for some horses to run over it; and, as the festivity of **Mithras** was celebrated on the 25th of December, we shall find this place much more inconvenient for Horse-Races, especially as the rain that falls on three parts of the higher lands surrounding it, must all descend into that ground.

Camplesham pasture, indeed,

was a more proper piece of ground, especially where horses carry their burthens. It is of an oval or oblong form, gently rising from the sides to the middle, making a ridge whence many thousand spectators might view the horses as they ran.

I observed before, p. 11, ante, that these races anciently were run in the open country, afterwards in inclosures, railed in with wood, to prevent the spectators from crowding too much on the course of the horses, but afterwards were performed at Rome in the great circus.

Stukeley makes no doubt there was a circus made at York; but I am of a very different opinion: because in a work of that size, there must have appeared some ruins, foundations, or other marks, many ages ago, whereas none were ever yet discovered.

In the next place, the number of the Roman people at York could not have filled even a small circus; and as they had neither Senators, Consuls, nor any number of persons of consequence, except what related to the military, there was no occasion for a circus to be built, especially as Camplesham pasture would be

large enough, and very convenient for the purpose.

'That the English have adopted many of the manners and customs of the Romans, relative to Horse-Races, is very evident to any observing reader of that history, in different stations of life, and so well contrived as to bear very little amendment. Let us therefore now enquire how closely we have followed them in respect of their Horses and Races.

I before informed the reader, that the Races formerly were run in the open country, till Tarquinius Priscus built the grand circus at

Rome, in which the Races were performed. How far the Horses run before they got to the last meta from the starting place, is not expressed by historians, but we are informed, that the above circus is said to be about two thousand one hundred and sixty seven Roman feet in length, and nine hundred and sixty broad, of a semicircular form at one end, the other ending in a right line, but rather circular; and that the Races commonly ended at the seventh turn round the metæ;^a though now and then we meet with, upon extraordinary occasions, fewer heats. The number and length

^a *Propertius*, lib. 2, eleg. 29.

of the heats also vary here. The usual number of missus or matches, were generally about twenty-four, though sometimes a far greater number were exhibited: for Suetonius tells us,^a that the Emperor Domitian presented a hundred matches in one day.

The time when the Races were to begin, was anciently given by sound of trumpet. Both these methods of matches, and calling the Horses to the starting place, are practised in Great Britain.

The Horses being up at the line, ready for starting, the signal

^a *Vit. Domit. Cap. 4.*

was given by mappa, or a napkin, hung out at the Prætor's tent, or chief Magistrate seat, whence the 'Tryers at the starting place in England, have followed the same custom. Hence Juvenal^a calls them Megalensian games.—
—Megaliacæ Spectacula Mappæ.

The rise of this custom was when Nero was once at dinner, and the people making a great noise, desiring that the sport might begin. The Emperor immediately threw the napkin he had in his hand out of the window, as a token he had granted their request.^b

^a *Sat.* 11.

^b *Cassador. L.* 5.

At these Races also, the Romans rode in different colours, particularly the companies of Charioteers, to distinguish themselves. There were generally four,^a viz. Prassina (green,) Russata (red,) Alba, or Albata (white,) and the Veneta (sky, or sea colour;) but the green was generally the favourite, especially under Caligula, Nero, and the following Emperors; but Suetonius tells us, that Domitian (who was made Emperor in A. D. 81, and died A. D. 96) added two more colours, viz. the golden or yellow, and the purple, but these were soon laid aside again by the

^a Kennet's *Roman Antiquities*, p. 255. pt. 2, lib. 5.

following Emperors.^a The English have continued in the same method to this day.

The victors in these sports were honoured with garlands, coronets, and other ornaments, after the Greek manner, and very often with considerable rewards in money. Hence Juvenal^b says,

Hinc centum patrimonia causiconum,
Parte alia solum russati pone lacertæ.

To this day it is customary in England to ornament the winning Horses with ribbands, and some of the men concerned with cockades.

^a *Vit. Domit. cap. 7.*

^b *Lips. comment in ocum.*

The people of Rome were so mad after the Races at the sacreds of Mithras, and also afterwards, in compliment to the Emperors, who so encouraged these sports, that there was an Ippodruna on purpose for Races, in most cities of the empire; and the people were so greatly delighted with them, that Juvenal^a censures this strange pleasure, as he calls it.

mihi pace

Immensæ nimîæque, licet si dicere plebis,
 Totam hodie Roman circus capit, et fragor aurem
 Percutit, eventum viridis quo colligo panni;
 Nam si deficeret, mæstam attonitamque videres
 Hanc urbem, veluti, canarum in pulvere, victis
 Consulibus —————

Which Congreve has thus translated;

^a *Sat. 7.*

This day all Rome (if I may be allow'd,
 Without offence to such a numerous crowd,
 To say all Rome) will in the circus sweat,
 Echoes already to their shouts repeat.
 Methinks I hear the cry,—Away, away!
 The green has won the honour of the day.
 Oh! shou'd these sports be but one day forborn,
 Rome would in tears her lov'd diversion mourn;
 And that would a cause of sorrow yeild,
 Great as the loss of Cannæ fatal field.

Pliny^a seems to be much of the
 same opinion in regard to Horse-
 Races; for, *miror, inquit tot millia
 virorum tam pueriliter indentidem
 cupere currentes Equos, insistentis
 curribus homines videre. Sitamen,*

^a Lib. 9. cap. 6. *collarii antiquit. Romanæ,*
 pa. 86. Suetonius Julis, cap. 39. Caligula,
 cap. 18. Nero, cap. 29. *Factionum exempla,*
apud eundem caligula, 55. Vitel. 14. Et in
multis inscriptionibus.

aut velocitate equorum, aut hominum arte traherentur, esset ratio nonnulla: nunc favent panno, pannum amant.

Such was the fondness too for the favourite horses, that Montfaucon^a tells us, and gives a copper-plate of a drawing from an urn, which has two inscriptions upon it; the uppermost regards the Horses, the lower the men, which begins with the letters D M, relates to the person interred therein. Over the first Horse was an inscription, the meaning of which is, "that this was in memory of the Horse Aquilo, begot by Aquilo, who had conquered 137 times, won

^a Antiquit. V. 5. pt. 1. lib. 2. cap. 11. p. 48.

the second prizes 88 times, and the third 37 times."

The inscription over the second horse, is thus Englished, "that Hirpinus, the grandson of Aquilo, conquered 140 times, won the second prize 57 times, and the third 37 times." Hence we see they kept a regular pedigree of their horses, which custom we keep up at this time. We must also observe, the inscriptions for the Horses are placed above that of the owners or riders, it being usual to pay more honour to their Race-Horses than to the men who rode or drove them; for they erected monuments to perpetuate their

memory, as may be seen in *Ælian*, *Pliny*, and others: and in *Spartian*, we find that *Hadrian* was so fond of his Horses and Dogs, that he built sepulchres for them; and there is yet remaining an epitaph which *Salmanasius* has given, that begins thus, “*Borys-thenes*, called *Alanus*, from the country he was of, the Emperor’s Race-Horse, &c.” The epitaph under the Horse, was made by order of *Claudia Helice*, for her husband *Lucius Avitus Dionisius*.

D. M.

CLAVDIA HELICE
FEC. L. AVI II. DIONISIO
COND. G. R. RVSSATA
CONIVGI DIGNISS.

In the ages long preceding the above, this noble animal the Horse, was in the highest esteem; for Dr. Hyde^a informs us, from a Persian author, that a factor of Shabditz had a most beautiful Horse, who had many peculiar qualities: “Adeo ut Colrois moriturus jusserit, ut in Latere Montis Pistun fierit Porticus Lapius, in cujus Medio collocaretur Figura hujus Equi, et super Dorso ejus sedens Castróes Loricó induit.” Many other instances I could give of the like regard.

Besides these Horse-Races at the

^a *Tract. de Ludis Orientalibus*, p. 10.

festivities, Spartian^a speaks of the Foot-Races, which was one of the Gymnasian sports, and began after the Horse and Chariot-Races were ended.

Something similar to this, is the practise in England of running Matches betwixt the Heats for public Plates.

I can produce the proofs of the Races as above, from many Roman coins: but a few instances will be sufficient.

The Races in the Circus Maximus at Rome, celebrated annually in

^a Montfaucon, *Antiquit.* v. 3, cap. i. p. 184.

the time of some of the Emperors, by those of equestrian order, whose president was called *Princeps Juventutis*, a title commonly taken by the Emperor's son, as frequently seen upon Roman coins.^a

Upon many of Aurelius's coins, we find *SOLI INVICT. and ORIENS AVG.* Inscriptions often taken by other Emperors after, and generally for the same reason as Aurelian, on celebrating the Races to Mithras.

The young figure, conjugate with Carausius on one of his coins, with a radicated crown, and a

^a Stukeley's *Pal. Brit.* p. 41.

whip before him, habited as Apollo, is supposed to be his son, Princeps Juventutis, his presumptive heir, his copartner in the young Ascainus, who rode these Mithriac games.^a Genebrier published two of Carausius's conjugated coins, whence, says Stukeley, we may gather, that the whip is often the symbol of those Mithriac courses, and that young head means no more than the son of the Emperor.

On another of Carausius's coins, is ORIENS AVG. Apollo has a whip in his right hand. On another of the same Emperors, on the reverse, Apollo Gradient to

^a Stukeley's *Pal. Brit.* p. 21.

the right, holds forth his right hand extended upwards, in his left a globe: he is naked, but mantled, inscription INVICTVS AVG. being the name of Mithras: in the exergue of the first is the letter C, probably signifying Corinium, our Cirencester, where many of these coins, in particular, were found. Spanheim says, Sint hæc rudimenta Augustæ spei in quam surgunt opportunè ORIENTES illi ascanii, &c. And again, in another place, Principis Juventutis appellationem, symbolum fuisse futuræ Successionis.^a

Two coins of Valerian have the

^a Stukeley's *Pal. Brit.* p. 21.

image of the Sun, on the reverse with his whip in his hand, the legend ORIENS AVG. meaning the Emperor and his son; and sometimes it means the Eastern part of the empire; sometimes the son and heir of the Emperor and Empire conjointly, with the character and office of Princeps Juventutis.

Thus Scaliger,^a in his notes upon Eusebius's *Chronology*, speaks of a coin of Carus and his son Numerian, with AVGG.^b on the reverse, this regards the Emperor's son.

^a Scaliger, p. 222.

^b It may be proper to explain the meaning of one, two, or three G's to the word AVG.

Carinus, son of Carus, celebrated these games, of whom the Poet Calpurnius, (an eye witness,) in his last Eclogue says,—*Utcunque tamen conspeximus ipsum longinus, ac nisi me decipit visus, in uno et martis, vultus et Apollinis esse putavi.*

Many other instances of other coins I could bring, but I think these are sufficient for the purpose.

AVGG. for the benefit of those not conversant with these kind of inscriptions: where the word Augustus is expressed by AVG. it means only one Emperor; if it be with two G's, there are two meant upon the same coin, as is above expressed; but if with three G's, as in some of Carausius's and other coins, PAX. AVGGG. &c. shews, that Carausius, Maximian, and Dioclesian, reigned at the same time.

Although from the above anecdotes it does not appear when Horse-Races began, yet it is evident they were used 635 years before the Nativity of our Saviour, in Anno Mundi 4715, now (1825) 2458 years ago: but it might be carried up 1200 years earlier than that time, because Josias destroyed the Chariots of the Sun in A. M. 3302. It also appears, that these ceremonies and diversions were used by various nations, in different countries, even to be traced to York, where the Mithriac festivities were performed, of which Horse-Races were a part. It likewise is evident, that these Races were encouraged by

the Emperors of Rome and Germany, and other chiefs and rulers, together with the eagerness that all ranks of people, even down to the very lowest class, have pursued these amusements, not only in ancient times, but also down to this very day in England. Nay, so closely have the English followed the practice of the Romans, and their manners, as above-mentioned, together with the proofs had from the sculpture and Roman coins, that there remains no doubt of their being used at York.

Some people may expect we should be able to give a full account of all these festival cere-

monies performed by the Romans, during their possessing this island, the same as we have of those of Rome; but they must consider, that most of the Romans in Britain were chiefly warriors, and few, if any writers or historians, to give any satisfactory account of, even things of more consequence than diversions, of which we have but very imperfect accounts. Let them consider also, that from the first landing of Julius Cæsar, 55 years before Christ was born, to the time the Roman army left this island, in A. D. 446, Anno Urb. Condit. 1198, after having been in possession 500 years, not the least notice is taken of the

British affairs for the space of 317 years of that time.^a Hence it is no wonder, that when we are so ignorant of the Roman affairs in this island, we have not any regular account of their amusements.

After the Romans quitted Britain, such confusion and cruel wars ensued, and continued for ages, that it is not at all surprising, that Horse-Races were so little used amongst the inhabitants, who had each a series of troubles, occasioned by the Danes and other foreign and domestic quarrels; and though

^a *Chronol.* table of occurrences relating to the Roman affairs in Britain, at the end of Horsley's *Britannia Romana*.

the disputes betwixt the houses of York and Lancaster ended in Henry VIII. yet religious disputes in that reign, in his son Edward VI. and Queen Elizabeth's time, and the quarrels with the Scotch, other business was to be minded, than barely diversions. But when James I. came to possess both the crowns of this island, people began to think of amusements, when the civil wars soon found the inhabitants other business.

The English, says Pennant,^a were ever attentive to an exact culture of this noble animal, a Horse, of as mixed a breed as that

^a *Zoolog. Britan.* 8vo. p. 3.

of the inhabitants, by introducing Horses from different countries, and for different purposes; some for speed only, some for burthens only, and others for drawing heavy carriages, &c. All which breeds, by properly crossing them in a judicious manner, enables England to triumph over the rest of Europe, in having brought each quality of this noble animal to the highest perfection.

The breed for Race-Horses are descended of Stallions brought from the Medes, Persians, and to Arabians, which they give Mares to suit in bone, size, strength, and wind; in all which, we have excelled all other countries.

Roger de Belesme, created Earl of Salisbury by the Conqueror, is the first upon record^a that introduced a Spanish Stallion into his estate in Powisland, from which, that part of Wales was celebrated for a swift and generous breed of Horses.

Giraldus Cambrensis, who lived in the reign of Henry II. takes notice of it; and Michael Drayton, cotemporary with Shakspeare, sings their excellence in the sixth part of his *Poly-Olbion*. This kind was destined to mount the nobility and knights for feats of

^a Pennant's *Zoology*, p. 4.

activity in chivalry in the contests in the Tilt Yard.

From these sprung, to speak the language of the times, 'the flower of coursers,' whose excellent form added charms to the rider, and whose activity and managed dexterity, gained him the palm in the field of romantic honour. Afterwards the gentlemen began, amongst other feats of Sporting, to try the fleetness of their Horses against one another, but rode themselves, without measuring the Horses, or weighing the burthens they were to carry; other methods being found out afterwards, by experience, to be necessary in fair matches.

That this was the chief object
of cultivating the mixed breed,
seems to be very probable, till
James the First's reign, when we
find Horse-Races at^a Croyden, in
the south, and at Gatherly^b Com-

^a Pennant's *Zoology*, p. 4. Osborn's works,
p. 45. Drayton's *Poly-Olbion*, song 3.

^b You heard how Gatherly race was run,
What Horses lost, what Horses won,
And all things else that there was done,
That day.

Now of a new race I shall you tell,
Was neither run for bowl nor bell,
But for a great wager, as it befel,
Men say.

Three gentlemen of good report,
This race did make, to make some sport;
To which great company did resort,
With speed.

mon, a little north of Richmond,
in Yorkshire, which were then
famous for Horse-Courses; but

To start them then they did require,
A gallant youth, a brave esquire,
Who yielded soon to their desire,

Indeed.

They started were, as I heard tell,
With, now St. George! God speed you well!
Let every man look to himsel,

For me.

From Sever-Hill to Popleton-Ash,
These Horses run with spur and lash,
Through mire and sand, and dirt, dish, dash,
All three.

Bay Corbet first the start he got,
A Horse well known, all fiery hot;
But he full soon his fire had shot,

What tho'?

how long they had been so before
we not are informed.

Edward Lord Herbert, of Cher-

For he was out of graith so sore,
He could not run as heretofore,
Nor ne'er will run so any more,

I trow.

Grey Ellerton then got the lead,
A gallant beast, of mickle speed;
For he did win the race indeed;

Even so.

Grey Appleton the hindermost came,
And yet the Horse was not to blame,
The rider needs must have the shame,

For that.

For tho' he chanc'd to come behind,
Yet did he run his rider blind;
He was a Horseman of the right kind,

That's flat.

bury, seemed to think these sports unworthy of a man of honour: "for in running Horses there is much cheating;^a neither do I see, why a brave man should delight

For when the race was past and done,
He knew not who had lost nor won;
For he saw neither moon nor sun,
As then.

And thus this race is at an end,
And so farewell to foe and friend;
God send us joy unto our end,
Amen.

^a Hence it is very apparent, that Horse-Races were very frequent, or Lord Herbert could not have had occasion to be so severe. And we find by Markham, that in the preceeding century, Running-Horses were trained; that was in A. D. fourteen hundred and odd, in some part of the fifteenth century, about three or four hundred years ago.

in a creature, whose chief use is to help him to run away." This Edward Lord Herbert died in 1648.

Gervase Markham, who wrote on the management of Horses; in A. D. 1579, mentions Running-Horses; but these were only designed for matches between one gentleman and another at that time: yet this diversion being so much esteemed, subscriptions were at last made towards purchasing a piece of plate, or making a purse, as a prize to the winning Horse.

Thus gentlemen went on, breed-

ing their Horses so fine, for the sake of shape and speed only, without considering, that those animals being only second, third, or fourth rates in speed, were then quite useless, until the reign of Queen Anne, when a public spirited gentleman, observing this inconvenience, left thirteen hundred guineas out of his estate, for thirteen Plates or purses, to be run for at such places as the crown should appoint, whence they are called the King's or Queen's plate, or guineas, upon condition, that each Horse, Mare, or Gelding, should carry twelve stone weight, the best of three heats, over a four-

mile course.^a By this method, a stronger, and more useful breed, were soon raised; and if a Horse did not win the guineas, he was yet strong enough to make a good hunter. By these crossings, as the Jockies term it, we have Horses of full blood, three quarters blood, or half bred cattle, suitable to carry any burthens; by which means, the English breed of Horses are allowed to be the best; and are greatly esteemed by foreigners.

^a By order, this is altered to one heat, and different weights are appointed.

FINIS.



